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OPA APPLIANCE REGULATIONS WIPE OUT PROFITS, CLAIMS APPEAL TO U. S. COURT

An appeal from a conviction for exceeding OPA ceiling prices has been filed with the U. S. Emergency Court of Appeals (which handles OPA cases) by Abram ("Pegg") Fournace, operator of a store in Indianapolis, Ind., selling used furniture and electrical appliances.

Mr. Fournace was convicted in the U. S. District Court for southern Indiana last summer and sentenced by Judge R. C. Baltzell to imprisonment for nine months and a fine of \$1,000 for selling washing machines, a refrigerator, and a vacuum cleaner at prices in excess of those prescribed respectively in OPA Regulations 139, 372, and 294.

The appeal case was heard by the court in Indianapolis recently and the decision is still pending.

Among the arguments used by the attorneys for Mr. Fournace were: OPA regulations are so vague and indefinite that used appliance dealers are unable to determine the maximum prices they should charge when reselling; also that the regulations absolutely wipe out the margin of profit, several cases where this had been proved were cited.

The claim was also made that the Emergency Price Control Act—1942 is unreasonable, unfair, and inequitable because it does not provide for a differential between the maximum prices imposed on persons from whom dealers must purchase for resale. In such cases dealers selling this merchandise, assert the attorneys, are required to sell at prices that are no higher than those to which any seller to a dealer is restricted.

The further claim was made that inasmuch as only used appliances are available with the consequent high demand for them resulting in maximum prices, and when sellers to dealers and consumers are charging the same prices, there is no profit to the dealer.

The attorneys also called the attention of the court to the fact OPA price regulations on used automobile and farm machinery fix maximum prices for sales by dealers and fix lower maximum prices for those who sell to dealers.

So far as is known, the claim continued, the regulations covering the purchase and sale of household appliances are the only ones in which OPA has established the same maximum prices for both dealers and those from whom dealers must buy.

CANADIAN LEGISLATURE VOTES LOCKER PLANT LICENSING LAW TO CURB "OVERBUILDING"

Officially described as a move to prevent "overbuilding" of locker plants, a recent ruling of the law amendments committee of the Manitoba (Canada) provincial legislature gives the minister of health and public welfare the sole right to refuse a license to anyone wanting to start up a locker plant.

Main opposition to the proposal came from M. A. Gray, representing the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation for Winnipeg, who contended that anyone who lived up to the various regulations should be allowed to operate a business without hinderance.

WPB REVISES STEEL ORDER M-126 TO KEEP IT IN LINE WITH OTHER REGULATIONS

WPB has revised Order M-126 covering steel to bring it in line with other WPB regulations and changes. Latest revision of the order emphasizes, also, that iron and steel for maintenance, repair, and operating supplies for products prohibited under the order may be used only to replace parts in such products but not for the manufacture of complete products.

NEW OPA SETUP PERMITS CHECK ON HOURLY RATE CHARGES FOR APPLIANCE REPAIRS

In a move to curb charging of excess prices for repairs to appliances, automobiles, and farm equipment, complaints of which OPA claims it has received, authority has been delegated to regional and district OPA offices to permit a check on hourly rate charges for repair services.

Under the new ruling, OPA field offices, if they deem it necessary, can require repair shops for these three types of equipment which charge an hourly rate to customers to give detailed invoices to the customers in all cases and to keep detailed time records.

OPA headquarters emphasizes that this action is "merely an enabling authority which permits the agency's field offices to act promptly when a need is shown to exist, and until any area orders are issued no changes are made in existing invoicing and record-keeping requirements.

"Complaints have been received over a considerable period that some repair shops, particularly those for household appliance repairs, are charging exorbitant prices," OPA declared.

Repair prices generally are "frozen" to their highest March, 1942, levels at present.

According to OPA, "one of the chief methods used to obtain higher prices than allowed under the prevailing 'freeze' ceilings has been to charge for more time than actually spent on the repairs, and any action that might be taken by OPA field offices under the authority would be confined to establishments that use an hourly rate in pricing any of the services they supply."

The uniform pattern decided upon for use in any area action issued by OPA field offices sets forth these two requirements:

1. Detailed invoices must be supplied all customers, whether requested or not, and copies must be retained by the shop for inspection. The details required are listed and are for the purpose of showing actual hours charged customers and the basis for the time charged.

2. Shops must keep records showing the name of each employe doing repair work, the number of hours worked daily as well as during each pay period by each employe, and a separate statement showing how much of this work was performed on internal jobs for which no direct charge is made customers. Records also must be kept showing the amount of wages paid these employes in each pay period.

G. R. SEEGER, CHAIRMAN OF SEEGER REFRIGERATOR BOARD, DIES

G. R. Seeger, chairman of the board of Seeger Refrigerator Co., St. Paul, died recently at the age of 56. He had been with the firm nearly 40 years, having started in 1908, working step by step through the entire plant.

WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION TO 'CERTIFY' WORKERS IN LOCKER PLANTS FOR DEFERMENT

Under the new draft deferment procedure whereby some government agencies "certify" to draft boards concerning the essentiality of employes in certain industries, the War Food Administration is permitted to certify workers in the locker plant industry, reports the National Frozen Food Locker Association.

The association quotes a statement by E. O. Pollock, midwest regional director of the Office of Supply, WFA, which includes the fruit and vegetable canning, packing, freezing, and dehydrating industries among those for which WFA is permitted to certify.

"No person can be certified for deferment unless he is doing indispensable work in the essential activities specified," points out Mr. Pollock's statement.

"A man is not considered indispensable if he can be replaced from less essential work within the plant or by recruitment from without the plant, or if a recruit or transferee can be qualified to perform his work through three months of intensive training. Men engaged in work for postwar purposes are not eligible for deferment."

14,350 FOUR-BURNER ELECTRIC RANGES ASSIGNED TO THREE FIRMS

Final authorizations, totaling 14,350 units, for the production of domestic electric ranges during the first and second quarters have been assigned by the War Production Board to three manufacturers.

Gibson Refrigerator Co. of Greenville, Mich., is to produce 5,000 in the first quarter; Norge Division's recently acquired plant at Effingham, Ill., has been assigned 1,350 for the first quarter and 2,000 for the second quarter; Roberts & Mander of Hatboro, Pa., is allowed 2,000 the first quarter and 4,000 the second quarter.

Previously WPB had assigned 7,500 ranges to Malleable Iron Range Co., Beaver, Dam, Wis., making the total authorizations 21,850. Except for 1,500 three-burner ranges, all ranges will be of four-burner type.

Actual production of electric ranges during the first quarter will total almost 35,000, said WPB officials, since manufacturers who were in production in the fourth quarter of 1944 were assigned temporary authorization to continue production, in the first quarter only, pending manpower clearance.

At a recent meeting of the Domestic Electric Range Industry Advisory Committee, WPB representatives announced a 27% reduction in the total amount of carbon steel available for allotment to range manufacturers by the Consumers Durable Goods Division in the second quarter, as compared with the first quarter of 1945.

They pointed out, however, that the steel available is expected to be sufficient to make as many ranges as can be made with the manpower estimated to be available in the second quarter. Furthermore, if necessary, WPB could stretch the steel supply by authorizing fewer four-burner ranges and more three-burner ranges, it was said. Between 75 and 80 pounds less steel is required to make a three-burner range, according to WPB representatives.

WPB MAY SHIFT ALUMINUM EARMARKED FOR CIVILIAN GOODS TO MILITARY PRODUCTION

Indications of further tightening of aluminum supplies for civilian production are contained in a recent ruling by the War Production Board concerning production of aluminum on "Z" orders intended for spot authorization programs.

Aluminum producers are now required to give WPB at least 15 days' notice before scheduling any "Z" orders, while at least five days' notice is required on aluminum castings. The move is intended to give WPB an opportunity to determine if the capacity earmarked for "Z" orders can be used for additional production of urgently needed military and essential civilian orders. The order is contained in Direction 65 to CMP Reg. 1.

BIG CITY BANKS SAID TO HAVE STANDARDIZED PLAN READY FOR FINANCING

APPLIANCE SALES TO DEALERS AND CONSUMERS

Banking institutions in metropolitan centers throughout the country are said to be completing the details of a program to finance dealer and consumer buying of household appliances. The program, according to plans, would be ready for operation almost as soon as civilian goods are ready for the market.

It is contemplated that the banking institutions would extend operation of the plan over a broad area in their territory by helping smaller banks that might also get in on the plan, helping out by taking a part of the paper purchased by the smaller banks from local dealers.

Broadly, the plan would provide for the usual type of conditional sales contract drawn up between the dealer and the consumer. The dealer would then take this contract to the bank and get his money, the bank taking the paper and the lien on the merchandise, and the consumer making his payments to the bank on an instalment basis.

The plan also provides for the financing of sales to dealers, with ideas for limited recourse and assumption of liability by the manufacturer in case of default.

PORTABLE PRODUCTS CORP. ACQUIRES TAGLIABUE

The C. J. Tagliabue Mfg. Co. of Brooklyn, manufacturer of industrial controls and laboratory instruments, has been acquired by the Portable Products Corp. of Pittsburgh, Pa.

The 65-year-old firm will be operated as a separate division with its present personnel, it was announced.

NATIONAL LOCKER ASSOCIATION SELECTS PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM TO PROMOTE INDUSTRY

Appointment of Sills, Inc., Chicago public relations counsel, to coordinate and direct a public relations program for the frozen food locker industry has been announced by Harry Flory of Eaton, Ohio, chairman of the public relations committee of the National Frozen Food Locker Association.

Aims of the program, according to Mr. Flory, are (1) to present the story of the industry, (2) to stress the economic advantages of using frozen food locker plants, (3) to correct popular misconceptions about the industry, (4) to render wartime service through constant promotion of frozen food lockers as the logical preserving agents for the produce of Victory gardens, and (5) to reveal the role which the industry will play in the postwar world.

GREATER USE OF ALUMINUM IN POSTWAR APPLIANCES PREDICTED AT SENATE HEARING

Household appliances after the war will employ increasing amounts of aluminum in their construction because of its light weight and insulating properties, predicted R. S. Reynolds, president of Reynolds Metals Co. when he appeared before the Senate's Small Business Committee recently.

Studying the possibilities of light metals for postwar, the committee was told by Mr. Reynolds that "anything you have to lift or move, such as baby carriages, step ladders, cans, and wheelbarrows should be made of aluminum."

The building trades can also be expected to revive and expand their prewar interest in aluminum as a building and furnishings material, he said.

Widespread expansion in the use of magnesium was also predicted for the committee by Edward S. Christiansen, president of Magnesium Co. of America. Although pointing out that magnesium weighed only about half as much as aluminum, Mr. Christiansen admitted that magnesium does not possess the corrosion-resistant properties of aluminum, and this would probably limit its use somewhat.

NEW RULES ANNOUNCED FOR CONVENTIONS AND TRADE SHOWS

The War Committee on Conventions has decided that conventions, conferences, and group meetings which have an out-of-town attendance of 50 or less in addition to the local attendance, will not require permits.

As it now stands, the interpretation of local meetings which do not require permits is "any meeting of a purely local nature, which is attended by not more than 50 persons who use transportation other than the regular facilities available within the city or suburban area—or in the case of a rural community, within the normal trading area—and for whom no hotel sleeping accommodations are required."

It was also announced by the committee that trade shows may not be held without committee approval if attendance, entries, or exhibitors are drawn from an area outside of that served by local or suburban transportation facilities—or in the case of rural communities, transportation facilities within the normal trading area—and for which hotel sleeping accommodations are required.

SIX WESTINGHOUSE SUPPLY MEN PROMOTED IN SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

In a move to prepare for expected increases in postwar business, W. A. Emerson, southeastern district manager of the Westinghouse Electric Supply Co., has announced six major district personnel changes.

L. G. Hardy, formerly branch manager at Jacksonville and Tampa, Fla., has been appointed southeastern district appliance manager with headquarters in Atlanta, Ga. C. W. Spengler of Miami, Fla., has been named acting manager of the Jacksonville branch of the company.

E. L. Houston has been appointed acting manager of the Tampa branch. S. R. Clark, formerly acting manager at Charlotte and Columbia, S. C., was appointed branch manager at Charlotte. O. C. Rhodes of Tampa was made acting manager of the Columbia, S. C., branch and R. E. Hallman of Charlotte was made acting manager of the Greenville, S. C., branch.

The appointment of O. A. Bruneau as Duluth, Minn., branch manager was also announced recently by R. L. Brown, northern district manager. Mr. Bruneau succeeds F. A. Johnson, who is retiring.